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The Noble Drama of W. B. Yeats

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|---|--|--------|
| 1 | <i>a fine native drama of our own</i> | page 1 |
| | 'When our political passions have died out in the fulfillment of their aims shall we, I wonder, have a fine native drama of our own? It is likely.' <i>United Ireland</i> , 11 July 1891 | |
| | Early dramatic poems
<i>The Land of Heart's Desire</i> | |
| 2 | <i>to restore the theatre of Art</i> | 33 |
| | 'It will take a generation, and perhaps generations, to restore the theatre of Art; for one must get one's actors, and perhaps one's scenery, from the theatre of commerce, until new actors and new painters have come to help one.' <i>Beltaine</i> , 1899 | |
| | The Irish Literary Theatre 1899-1901
<i>The Countess Cathleen</i>
<i>Diarmid and Grania</i>
<i>Beltaine</i>
<i>Samhain</i> | |
| 3 | <i>a return to the people</i> | 65 |
| | 'Our movement is a return to the people, like the Russian movement of the early seventies, and the drama of society could but magnify a condition of life which the countryman and the artisan could but copy to their hurt.' <i>Samhain</i> 1902 | |
| | The National Theatre Society 1902-1904
<i>Cathleen Ni Houlihan</i>
<i>Where There is Nothing</i>
<i>The Pot of Broth</i>
<i>The Hour-Glass</i>
<i>The King's Threshold</i>
<i>The Shadowy Waters</i> (first version) | |
| 4 | <i>a household of living art</i> | 103 |
| | 'It will be necessary to create a household of living art in Dublin, and principles that have become habits, and a public that has learnt to care for a play because it is a play and not serviceable to some cause.' <i>Samhain</i> 1904 | |
| | The Abbey Theatre 1904-1909
<i>On Baile's Strand</i>
<i>Deirdre</i> | |

- The Shadowy Waters* (stage version)
The Unicorn from the Stars
The Golden Helmet
The Green Helmet
The Arrow
- 5 *the condition of tragic pleasure* 147
 'It was only by watching my own plays that I came to understand that this reverie, this twilight between sleep and waking, this bout of fencing, alike on the stage and in the mind, between man and phantom, this perilous path as on the edge of a sword, is the condition of tragic pleasure, and to understand why it is so rare and so brief.'
 'The Tragic Theatre': *The Mask*, 1910
 Gordon Craig and the screens 1909-1913
The Player Queen
- 6 *ancient memories* 189
 'Perhaps some day a play in the form I am adapting for European purposes shall awake once more, whether in Gaelic or in English, under the slope of Slieve-na-Mon or Croagh Patrick ancient memories; for this form has no need of scenery that runs away with money nor of a theatre building.'
Certain Noble Plays of Japan, 1916
 Ezra Pound and the theory of the Nō 1913-1916
- 7 *I but offer them 'an accomplishment'* 219
 'I want so much — an audience of fifty, a room worthy of it (some great dining-room or drawing-room), half a dozen young men and women who can dance or speak verse or play drum and flute and zither, and all the while, instead of a profession, I but offer them "an accomplishment."'
 'A People's Theatre': *The Irish Statesman*, 1919
 The Plays for Dancers 1916-1922
At the Hawk's Well
The Dreaming of the Bones
The Only Jealousy of Emer
The Cat and the Moon
Calvary
(The Bridegroom)
- 8 *the symbol of a movement* 259
 'When I remember the great honour that you have conferred upon me, I cannot forget many known and unknown persons. Perhaps the English committees would never have sent you my name if I had written no plays, no dramatic criticism, if my lyric poetry had not a quality of speech practised upon

the stage, perhaps even — though this could be no portion of their deliberate thought — if it were not in some degree the symbol of a movement.'

'The Irish Dramatic Movement' (Nobel Prize address) 1923

1923-1929

Sophocles' King Oedipus

Sophocles' Oedipus at Colonus

The Resurrection (first version)

Vrouwe Emer's Grootte Strijd

Fighting the Waves

9 *a bell with many echoes* 285

'I must speak of things that come out of the common consciousness, where every thought is like a bell with many echoes.' *Wheels and Butterflies*, 1934

1930-1938

The Words Upon the Window Pane

The Resurrection (final version)

The King of the Great Clock Tower

A Full Moon in March

The Herne's Egg

Purgatory

10 *I have aimed at tragic ecstasy* 309

'I have had greater luck than any other modern English-speaking dramatist; I have aimed at tragic ecstasy and here and there in my own work and in the work of my friends I have seen it greatly played.' *On the Boiler*, 1939

1939

The Death of Cuchulain

On the Boiler

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